



INSIDE INDIA

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USAID Health Interventions Improve Women and Children's Health

USAID supported health interventions have improved the health and nutrition status of women and children in several parts of the country, according to the key findings of a series of 12 working papers on *Women and Child Health at Scale*, which were released by USAID and CARE India at a national dissemination event last week in New Delhi. The papers highlight the findings from five years (2001-2006) of the USAID supported Integrated Nutrition and Health Project II (INHP-II), which was implemented across 78 districts in nine states; Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

INHP-II was designed to improve the status of nutrition and child health in India and to help reduce the high rates of malnutrition and infant mortality. The project covered about 100 million people (roughly 10% of India's population), including pregnant women, lactating mothers, and children under two years of age. Implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Women and Child Development (Integrated Child Development Services Scheme), the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, local NGOs, and community-based organizations, INHP is one of the largest public health programs run by a Private Voluntary Organization (PVO) in the world.

Results from the INHP interventions demonstrate marked and substantial improvements in nutritional status, access to, and use of health and family planning services as well as important changes in behavior in the intervention areas. Perhaps the most significant finding is that there was 8% decline in malnutrition among children, from 61% - 53%, in the INHP areas. Other findings include: a more than 12% increase in the number of pregnant women receiving 90+iron supplement tablets; a doubling of measles vaccinations given to children between 12-23 months; large improvements in most key indicators related to immediate newborn care at birth, including the initiation of complementary feeding along with breastfeeding at 6-9 months of age by 29%; and a 4.8% increase in the Contraceptive Prevalence Rate over a three year period (2003-2006).

Speaking at the event, Ms. Elizabeth Hogan, Mission Director/A, USAID stressed the importance of improving the health and nutrition of mothers and children in the country. She said, *"USAID is pleased to be a partner in the improvement of the health and nutrition of mothers, children, and families in India. The program discussed today is one manifestation of USAID's support and commitment. We will continue to support evidence-based programs and technically sound approaches to address these needs and have a number of ongoing and new programs to do so."*



USAID Mission Director/A, Beth Hogan at the dissemination event in New Delhi.

Photo: Meeta Parti USAID

Cross Cutting Agra Project Recognized as a Good Practice

USAID's Cross Cutting Agra Project (CAP) was recently recognized as a "Good Practice" by the UN-HABITAT *Best Practices and Local Leadership Programme*. Since 1996, UN HABITAT has collected approximately 2,000 successful practices from around the world that have been designed to improve governance, eradicate poverty, provide access to shelter, land and basic services, protect the environment, and support economic development. The practices are then put into a searchable database that others can learn from and incorporate into their own work. Projects included in the data base are also submitted for consideration in the biennial Dubai International Award for Best Practices in Improving the Living Environment.

The Cross Cutting Agra Project was started in 2005 to specifically address issues of livelihood, sanitation, and environment improvement in selected low-income settlements near the Taj Mahal in Agra. The project was designed to increase employment opportunities for the poor and provide infrastructure upgrades in slums around a Heritage Trail of lesser-known monuments in Agra. Local institutional arrangements were set up to sustain the enterprise started under the project. The project, implemented in partnership with the Agra Local Body, has served as a demonstration pilot to help bring together a wide range of stakeholders in the city for consultation and planning and partnering for slum upgrading.

At the community level there are now more organized groups addressing a diverse set of needs and participating in project implementation. Women in particular have been empowered through their involvement in livelihood groups. Matching the vocational skills of women who do sewing to demand within the local hotel industry has helped create sustainable income generating opportunities' for women. They are able to operate bank accounts, manage finances, and deal with clients and are more financially secure and better able to advocate for their rights within their own families.

As part of the project, local task forces have created opportunities for civil society engagement in planning for city development and have helped address issues of slum upgrading, improved housing, access to basic water and sanitation services, tourism, governance, education, health, and livelihood development. The first city wide slum and heritage mapping has helped the local government to understand the scale of the problem. The project has also provided the Agra Municipal Corporation support in pursuing funds under the Government of India's Jawaharlal Nehru Urban Renewal Mission.

USAID Partner Mobilizes Corporate Support for HIV/AIDS



Employees of USAID partner PSI recently participated in the Mumbai marathon, Asia's largest marathon, as a way to engage and mobilize corporate donations for HIV/AIDS. PSI successfully raised Rs.2.34 lakhs (\$4,800) from Johnson & Johnson for the 2009 Mumbai marathon. A team of 30 employees of Johnson & Johnson ran in the Mumbai marathon to support the cause of HIV/AIDS.